

the US government is taking less responsibility than virtually all the other industrial democracies.

PS: Why take just democracies? Even in the fascist countries, everybody's got healthcare. We are the only nation extant that doesn't offer healthcare to everybody.

Take our neighbor Canada. There is no more conservative government on this continent, north or south. I've heard the wealthiest right-wing Canadian government minister say, "I went to private prep schools, but it never would it occur to us Canadians to jump the queue, go to the head of the line in healthcare. We believe healthcare is universal. Now, we fight about spending levels, we fight about the bureaucracy, and we fight about how we're working the payment system." But they don't question it.

World: In the US we do question it—the right to healthcare, that is, Why?

PS: It's connected with this idea of independence. Where do we get the militias from, and those yahoos who run around in soldier suits and shoot paint guns at each other?

World: The frontier ethos?

PS: Maybe, maybe. And the American Medical Association is not exactly exempt from blame. The physicians are the most antigovernment group of all. They're the highest paid profession in America by far, and so they are protecting their economic interests. Though the government now looks a little better to them than the insurance industry because they have more control over government than over the insurance companies.

Look, the country was barely ready for Medicare when that went through. It just made it through Congress by a few votes. There are some of us who would have liked to see it include nursing home or long-term convalescent care. That can only be done through social insurance, but people won't admit it. They say, "There's got to be a better way." It's a mantra. On healthcare: "There's got to be a better way." Education: "There's got to be a better way."

They've yet to say it for defense though. I'm waiting for them to privatize the Defense Department and turn it over to Pinkerton. Although in a way they have. There's a bunch of retired generals right outside the Beltway making millions of dollars of government money training the armed forces in Bosnia. I was there and what a bunch of crackpots! They've got these former drill sergeants over there, including people out to try to start wars on our ticket.

World: A few more short questions. Have the culture and atmosphere of the House changed in the years since you arrived here?

PS: Yes, though I spent 22 years in the majority and now four in the minority, so I may just be remembering good old days that weren't so good. Back when I was trying to end the Vietnam War, I was in just as much of a minority as I am now, and I didn't have a subcommittee chair to give me any power or leverage.

On the other hand, look at the country now. Look at tv talk shows—they argue and shout and scream, and then they call it journalism. Maybe we're just following in their footsteps.

World: Is it a spiritual challenge for you to have to work with, or at least alongside, people with whom you disagree, sometimes violently?

PS: Yes, and I don't do a very good job. My wife says, "When you retire, why don't you become an ambassador?" And I say, "Diplomacy doesn't run deep in these genes." But it's tough if you internalize your politics and believe in them.

Still, I like legislating—to make it all work to take all the pieces that are pushing on you, to make the legislation fit, to accommodate and accomplish a goal. It really makes the job kind of fascinating. I once reformed the part of the income tax bill that applies to life insurance, and that's one of the most arcane and complex parts of the tax bill. It was fun—bringing people together and getting something like that. And actually, writing that health bill was fun.

But not now. We don't have any committee hearings or meetings anymore. It's all done in back rooms. Under the Democratic leadership we used to go into the back room, but there were a lot of us in the room. Now they write bills in the speaker's office and avoid the committee system. I mean, it's done deals. We're not doing any legislating, or not very much.

World: Do you think about quitting?

PS: No, I don't think about quitting. I'd consider doing something else, but I don't know what that is. Secretary of health and human services? Sure, but don't hold your breath until I'm offered the job. Even in the minority, being in the Congress is fascinating, and as long as my health and facilities hold out. . . . I mean, I'm not much interested in shuffleboard or model airplanes.

#### IN TRIBUTE TO BILL SEREGI

#### HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 4, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my sad responsibility to advise our colleagues of the recent passing of an outstanding American, a remarkable individual, and a tremendous philanthropist.

Bill Seregi was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1903. Although as a youth he aspired to a career in engineering, he found this avenue closed to him by the blatant anti-Semitism which permeated that part of Europe at that time. Instead, Bill went into the jewelry trade at a young age, and soon was considered a master of that trade in his home nation.

In 1928, he married the lovely Lily and thus began a marriage which lasted seventy years. The union between Bill and Lily is an inspiration to all of us.

By 1939, Bill and Lily were considered leading citizens of Budapest. That year, World War II struck Europe like a dreaded thunderstorm, and no life was left untouched. As devout Jews, Bill and Lily found themselves targeted by the oncoming Nazi hordes. Bill was sentenced to a concentration camp. Torn from his family, Bill was forced to toil at slave labor in the Nazi labor camps. It was only his hope of reuniting with his family which kept Bill alive during the horrible years of the Holocaust.

After the defeat of Nazi Germany, Bill was reunited with Lily and they brought together the survivors of their family. Bill and Lily spent the post-war years trying to rebuild their shattered lives. But the respite was short-lived. Hungary was soon taken over by Soviet dictators and, in many ways, life was no better than under Nazi domination. In 1951, Bill and Lily emigrated to the United States to start a new life, for themselves and their family.

Once he had emigrated to the U.S., Bill found the peace and freedom which he so

vainly sought all of his life. No freedom did he cherish more than his right to worship according to his own beliefs and the beliefs of his faith. Bill learned very soon after arriving in America about B'nai Zion, the brotherhood organization of people desiring a homeland for Jews in Palestine. Bill soon threw most of his energies into the many philanthropic works of B'nai Zion. He became President of one of the local chapters of B'nai Zion, the Theodore Herzl Lodge.

Bill Seregi devoted a great part of his life to the B'nai Zion Foundation, as well as to various fund raising efforts for the State of Israel. Bill earned a name for himself throughout the greater New York region, and became highly respected as a superb spokesperson. He was active in the America Israel Friendship League, which cemented a good relationship between our nations. Bill also established a "Gift of Giving Scholarship" award presented to students of New York City high schools.

In presenting the scholarship to the worthy students, Bill Seregi summed up his philosophy of life to them:

- "a. Help those in need
- b. Fight against intolerance
- c. Study more than you want to
- d. Be grateful to those who teach you; and
- e. Knowledge is your fortune."

A few years ago, Bill Seregi was the recipient of the Dr. Harris J. Levine Award, the highest honor possible from the B'nai Zion organization. At that time, Norman G. Levine, the son of the philanthropist for whom the award was named, stated: "There could not possibly be any better candidate or anyone more dedicated to the same principles as my father than Bill."

Bill left us on Dec. 16th, 1998, at his golden age of 95. He leaves behind his widow Lily, to whom he had been married for more than 70 years. He also leaves his children, Ann and Larry, his grandchildren Ellie and Lewis, and many loving nieces and nephews and their families.

By fleeing the tyranny of Communism in 1951, Bill Seregi demonstrated that it is never too late for any individual to seek freedom, liberty and justice for themselves and their families. By continuing his career as a master of the art of jewelry as well as his advocacy of Zionist and philanthropic causes, Bill underscores the old adage that if you want something done, ask a busy person. No one will ever fully know the suffering Bill and Lily experienced under both Nazism and Communism, and no one will ever know how many lives they touched and how many people were positively impacted by their decision to help others rather than curse their own misfortune.

Mr. Speaker, our condolences are extended to the many loved ones Bill leaves behind, and the countless individuals who were inspired by this outstanding human being.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF MR. JAMES CALVIN PIGG

#### HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 4, 1999

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, It is my distinct privilege to rise today to honor one of

February 4, 1999

Texas' finest agricultural journalists, Mr. James Calvin Pigg, editor of the Southwest Farm Press magazine in Dallas, Texas. Calvin has served as editor since the magazine's founding in 1974, faithfully reporting agricultural news for Southwest Farm Press for 25 years. A native Texan, Calvin has practiced his craft on radio, television, and print coverage of agriculture in the Southwest since 1955. After more than 40 years on the Texas and Oklahoma agricultural scene, his hands-on reporting style keeps stories fresh and interesting. Reporting the dynamic and ever-changing events within the agriculture industry is an important duty since farmers and ranchers across the Southwest depend on this information.

In addition to his Farm Press duties, he has served as a member of the Dean's Advisory Committee for Texas Tech University's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and has received the college's prestigious Gerald W. Thomas Outstanding Agriculturnists Award in 1985. His unsurpassed dedication and genuine concern for the South Plains agricultural industry is legendary. He also was honored for his distinguished service to Texas agriculture by the Professional Agricultural Workers of Texas in 1980. Calvin was the president of the Dallas Agricultural Club in 1989, and his active involvement in various professional and honor societies proves he truly is a friend of agriculturists.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. James Calvin Pigg on his commitment to the agricultural industry and his tireless dedication and service to Southwest Farm Press.

#### LEGISLATION TO BENEFIT THE AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY NATIONWIDE

**HON. GARY A. CONDIT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 4, 1999*

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, today, I have introduced several pieces of legislation that I believe should be considered during the 106th Congress. These bills represent a broad array of policy initiatives that will benefit the agriculture community nationwide.

#### AGRICULTURAL WATER CONSERVATION ACT

Over the past few years I have read countless articles on the need to conserve water and the role federal government has with this mission. While discussing water conservation methods with farmers in my district, I found cost was their overriding concern. The outlays required to implement water conservation systems, (i.e., drip irrigation, sprinkler systems, ditch lining) are a tremendous burden on the agriculture industry. While I firmly believe most agriculture interests are genuinely concerned about conserving water, cost has crippled the ability to implement conservation methods on farms.

The Agricultural Water Conservation Act is not a mandate for expensive water conservation systems, it is a tool and an option for farmers. Specifically, it will allow farmers to receive up to a 30% tax credit for the cost of developing and implementing water conservation

#### EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

plans on their farm land with a cap of \$500 per acre. The tax credit could be used primarily for the cost of materials and equipment. This legislation would not require them to change their irrigation practices. However, it would allow those farmers who want to move toward a more conservation approach of irrigation but cannot afford to do it during these tough economic times.

#### CANNED PEACH RESOLUTION

For almost two decades, the European Union (EU) has been heavily subsidizing its canned fruit industry to the detriment of California cling peach producers and processors. Despite a Section 301 investigation, a favorable GATT ruling against the EU, and a subsequent US/EU agreement intended to contain the problem, the EU canned fruit regime has in fact grown considerably more disruptive over time. In recent years, EU canned fruit subsidies have greatly increased (now totaling between \$160–\$213 million annually), as has injury to the California industry in every one of its markets.

The resolution I introduced today details the problem, identifies it to be of priority concern, and calls for corrective action. I hope by introducing this resolution we can highlight this dispute as a trade priority, underscore that relief is long-overdue and convey a message to the EU that its canned fruit subsidy excesses must be discounted.

#### LAND FOR YOUNG FARMERS AND RANCHERS

We are well aware of the migration away from rural areas in part due to the difficulty young people encounter to stay in farming. I believe providing young farmers the opportunity to discover, first-hand, the changing technologies agriculture presents and to keep them interested in agriculture is a vital role for Congress. This legislation will help advance young people's interest in farming much like the USDA's Beginning Farmer Program.

Specifically, this bill will allow education institutions and non-profit organizations that are involved in teaching farming to young people the ability to acquire land held by USDA. Currently this ability is available, however, these specific groups are put at the bottom of the list of people who are eligible to bid for the land. Under current law, these groups are bidding against interested parties such as real estate investors, land speculators, and business groups, all of which could easily increase the price of the land making it financially impossible for organizations interested in keeping the land in farming. My legislation will provide these nonprofits and educational institutions the same purchasing rights to USDA land as beginning farmers. Under the bill, these groups must be involved in teaching young people farming practices they can use to start their own farming practice. Given the current age of our farm and ranch population, I believe the ability for young people to start a farming or ranching operations remains a top priority of the agriculture community. This bill will continue to advance that priority.

1923

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PRESERVATION ACT OF 1999

**HON. BOB BARR**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 4, 1999*

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the United States Federal Government Preservation Act. On the first day of the 106th Congress, I introduced H.R. 62 and H.R. 63. Both of these bills concern Executive Order 13107, which President Bill Clinton signed on December 10, 1998. Today I am introducing a redrafted version of this legislation. The two bills I am reintroducing today take the necessary steps to nullify the provisions of Executive Order 13107 and prevents the Federal Government from spending any money to implement this Executive Order.

Executive Order 13107 directs the Federal Government to take numerous steps to require our nation to comply with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD). In my legislation, I discussed the fact that these treaties were never given the advice and consent of the Senate. In clarification, these treaties did in fact pass the Senate by voice vote.

Our Constitution provides in Article II, section 2, clause 2, that "He [the President] shall have the Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur." Because these treaties were accepted by voice vote, we cannot be certain where each individual Senator stands on the particular treaties involved. I believe these concerns warrant a debate, and an individual vote in the Senate. Committing the American people to United Nations treaties is an endeavor that should be carefully scrutinized.

President Clinton claims this Executive Order was written to promote this Administration's human rights record. In actuality, it acts as a vehicle to commit the United States to a definition of human rights that is vastly different from the one contained in our Constitution. The United Nations defines human rights in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which addresses the freedom of thought, conscience, religion, opinion, and expression. Article 29 of this document states that "These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations."

The founding documents of the United States make it clear that basic human rights are inalienable, meaning they descend from the ultimate Sovereign, the Creator, God. Therefore, no human authority, no government, no criminal, no individual can abrogate or abridge those rights. The United Nations has frequently shown only contempt for biblical values, American sovereignty, and the U.S. Constitution. If the government can bestow upon a people certain rights, it can just